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THE  
Necessity and Reward  
O F  
A Willing Mind.

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A  
SERMON

Preach'd at E X O N before  
An Assembly of Ministers

Of the Counties of

Devon and Somerset,

*April 16. 1693.*

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By JOHN BUSH.

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L O N D O N,

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PERMON

Printed at the  
of Alexander



Printed and Published

By JOHN B.

To my Brethren the Ministers of the Counties of  
D<sup>u</sup>rn and Somers<sup>e</sup>t, allowed by Act of Parliam<sup>e</sup>nt,  
and others that read this Discourse.

Reverend Brethren,

**T***Hough in the ensuing discourse I treat of the necessity of a Willing Mind to the acceptable performance of our Duty, I must confess I was not (if I could have handsomly avoided it) very willing to Preach to such an Assembly, much less to Print the Discourse: I have done both at your request, because I took it as a Command which I could not but Obey; and yet knowing how unfit I was to do either, I thought that an excuse for my Unwillingness, notwithstanding which I resolved to give a due submission to your Judgment; without that I should declin'd both the one and the other: the true Reason why I chose to speak to this subject, was because I found in my self a great defect of this disposition, and I considered it might be so with other Ministers as well as my self, and in stirring up you to the Willing and Chearful Performance of your Duty, I hoped to warm my self by the same Fire which I was to make for others: if in what I have done, I may but serve as the small Wood to kindle the Fire, 'tis as much as I designed. I am afraid we are not enough thankful to God and the Government for the peaceable exercise of our Ministry, which is not given us upon a design (as formerly) by a Prince that did what he did in this matter to exalt his own prerogative, and to trample upon the laws in order to bring in Popery, but by a Prince that hath adventured to shew kindness to an afflicted depressed party, in the Face of those that seem to envy us this kindness, as much as ever the Patriarchs did their Father Jacobs to their Brother Joseph. Surely all things considered:*

our Liberty to attend our Duty in Peace and Quietness is one of the greatest Instances of a Divine project baffling the Counsels of Men, that hath hapned in our days in this Nation ; for hereby that is given by Law, which some Men never Intended to suffer, much less to Establish ; behold in this the Wisdom of God that hath so circumstantiated our Liberty, that now it seems to be interwoven with the Interest of the Government, so that who ever declares himself an Enemy to the former, will hardly be thought a hearty Friend to the latter. And We shall never express a grateful sense of this Mercy of God to us without a more chearful performance of our Duty, in submission to our present Circumstances ; Discouragements will never excuse us in the worst of times, much less now, whilst we have what the Apostles never liv'd to see ; for they only had the future reward, but we with that the allowance of the Law, and by that means a freedom from trouble, a mercy which whilst we wanted we valued more than now we seem to do.

The Discourse as 'tis Printed varieth not from what was delivered, at least from what I designed to deliver : I have added nothing to, nor omitted any material passage that I found in my Notes. The Lord give us all more of the Apostles Willing Mind, that we may have the same Reward.

So Prayeth

Middleney, May 13th.  
1693.

Your unworthy Brother

in the Ministry.

John Bush.



## 1 Corinthians 9. 17.

*For if I do this willingly, I have a Reward: but if against my will, a Dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me.*

**T**HE Defence that the Apostle makes for himself throughout the Epistle, and particularly in this Chapter, argues that there were some persons (if not Ministers) in the *Church of Corinth*, that did question his Apostolical Power, besides the reflection that they made upon his gifts, and practice; but the uncertainty as to matter of fact, wherein the accusation lay, maketh some places in this Chapter, and throughout the whole Epistle the more difficult to be understood; 'tis probable that part of the accusation lay in this, that the Apostle laboured with his hands as a secular person, and did not live as a person devoted to the Ministry, which ordinarily requires a man's whole time and thoughts; and consequently that being a poor Mechanick, he disparag'd his Office for the present, and must at last be maintain'd by the Charity of the Churches; and that in pressing them to such a liberal Contribution for the Saints at *Jerusalem*, he design'd to have a share of it to his own use: something of this nature was laid to his charge, besides the reflection that they made upon his gifts, as being one that could make a shift to write, but not readily to expose his own thoughts; for so I understand the

Baxter *in locum.*

meaning of those words, *his bodily presence is weak*. As to the first of these, his Apostolical Power, he asserts it in the first Verse of this Chapter; *Am I not an Apostle? am I not free? have I not seen the Lord Jesus?* Shewing, that though he had not convers'd with our Saviour whilst on Earth, (which was the ground of the Objection, and seems to have some weight in it: For when the Apostles would supply the room of *Judas*, to make up the number twelve, according to the number of the twelve Tribes, they chose one that had accompanied with them, *Acts* 1. 21, 22.) yet notwithstanding this, he was as much an Apostle as they, and that he had seen Christ in the way to *Damascus*, when he receiv'd his Commission to be an Apostle, *and that he was free, i. e.* not oblig'd to one Person or Church more than to another upon a civil account, so as to bestow his pains upon them for nought; and that the *Corinthians* had less cause than other men to question his Apostleship; for their Conversion was the Seal of his Office, *viz. If I be not Apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you.*

But the great case upon which the Apostle insists for his Justification is about *Maintenance*, which the Apostle did not only not *Receive*, but *Refuse*; and yet lest his *Refusal* should be drawn into a *president* for the time to come, to the prejudice of a Settled *Ministry*, he takes the matter into consideration, shewing, and that from the equitable part of the Law of *Moses*, (which though a Law to *Israel* doth not oblige us Christians, yet from the equity of that Law he proves) that ordinarily it is the duty of the People to maintain them that Preach to them: *As they that ministred about the Temple and Altar, Levites and Priests, did live of the Temple and Altar; so they that Preach the Gospel have a Right to live of the Gospel; v. 13, 14.* And yet because that which in the general may be lawful, may not at all times; and to some particular

tical persons be expedient, for this reason the Apostle declin'd the taking of Maintenance from the Church of Corinth; v. 15. *I have used none of these things, neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me; for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void;* meaning that the success of his Ministry which he calls his glory, was dearer to him than his Right to a Maintenance. And yet the Apostle would not be mistaken, as if, because he was free from all men by Preaching *Gratis*, that therefore he thought himself at liberty to Preach, or not to Preach the Gospel; no; *necessity is laid upon me; Wo is unto me if I Preach not the Gospel;* v. 16. Now the Apostle having considered the necessity of his duty, doth in these words consider that disposition of mind that is necessary to the acceptance of his Duty, shewing, that 'tis not the bare performance, but the willing performance that God would reward. *If I do this willingly, &c.*

So that there is an Antithesis in the words, though both parts of it are not expressly mentioned; and in this Antithesis there is a twofold Supposition, and a twofold Inference.

1. From the willing and chearful performance of his duty, the Apostle infers the certainty of his Reward; he doth not say, I shall have, but *I have a Reward.*

He speaks *de presenti*, not that he expected the Reward here, but because of its certainty, in which case we use to say, *Sure pay is as good as ready Money.*

2. From the unwilling performance of his duty he infers (but 'tis by Implication) the Loss of the Reward, adding, that notwithstanding his unwilling mind, if such a frame should return upon him, he would check it with the sense of his duty; *A dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me;* as if he had said, I must Preach the Gospel, 'tis committed

to me; were I not therefore better do it willingly; and be rewarded, than with an unwilling mind, and so lose or lessen the future Reward? 'Tis true as some observe, the word *εὐαρί* that is translated, *willingly*, signifies *Injussus*, to which the word, *of my own accord*, better answers; and yet I do not think that the Apostle did reckon that in so doing, Preaching without a Maintenance *gratis*, he did more than his duty was, *absolutely considered*. This the Papists would have to be the sense of the place, telling us that this; and some other Scriptures establisheth their *Doctrine of Divine Counsels*, which we are at liberty to refuse or observe; for they make neither duty nor sin: And yet if we observe them, we do *supererrogate*, and attain a state of Perfection highly meritorious: Now I do not see how this place favours them in the least; for if the unwilling mind be a loss of the Reward, then it must needs follow that the Apostle did no more than his duty (all things considered) was to do: For the scope of the Apostle's Discourse seems to amount but to this, that though Ministers in the general have a Right to Maintenance, as much as ever the Priests and Levites had to live by the Temple and Altar upon Tythes and Offerings (I say as much, though not in the same manner, the Apostle doth not prove it from the Letter of the Law, but from the equitable part of the Law, and therefore doth not prove the same sort of Maintenance) yet (notwithstanding this, that 'twas in the general his Right) for some particular Reasons it was his duty not to insist upon his own Right; for (as one observes in another case) there is a great difference between an *Universal Law*, and a Man's Personal Obligations for some other Law, not opposing, but explaining that *Universal Law*, as is very evident in the case before us. In the general 'tis the duty of the People to maintain them that Preach to them; for  
ordinarily

ordinarily if the People do not perform their duty, the Minister can't perform his; and yet notwithstanding this, a particular Minister may fall under a Personal Obligation not to expect this from the People, either when the People *cannot do it*, or when the Minister *needs it not*; but above all, when the taking of Maintenance is *apparently an hinderance of the success of his Ministry*, which was the Apostle's case. Now in doing this no man supererrogates, or doth more than his duty. I shall not determine absolutely that what was the Apostle's *practice* is any Minister's *duty* at present, but am of Opinion, that to say the Apostle did more than his duty, is to favour the *Popish Doctrine of Counsels*, and to say, that though it was the Apostle's duty to do this, it can't be ours, is to prescribe to Almighty God what our Circumstances shall be, of which no Man is Master: And 'tis easie to prove, that notwithstanding the Universal Law of God which determines our duty *in the general*, our *Personal Obligations* do arise from our *Personal Circumstances*: This therefore is the Apostle's Argument; he doth not determine directly any other Man's duty, but for himself he could not see how he could lawfully do otherwise, to stop the mouths of his Adversaries, to promote the success of his Ministry, and to obtain the future Reward; in relation to which he considers in the next verse, *What then is my Reward?* that is, what is the way to obtain the Reward? *viz.* making the Gospel of Christ without charge.

*But if against my will, a Dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me*; the Translators have put in a word which they thought to be the sense of the Apostle, which is not in the Greek; for 'tis only thus, *οικονομίαν παρέσχευμαι*, with an Accusative Case, *I have received a Stewardship*; or a *Dispensation is committed to me*: And you must not imagine that this Trust is committed to him, upon the condition of his

his unwilling mind ; no, but rather the *conditional* hath the force of an *Exceptive*, which is not unusual with the Apostle ; *Rom. 8. 10. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin ; i. e. though Christ be in you ; so here, If against my will, though against my will ; that is, I am still under a necessity of doing my duty, willing or unwilling I may lose my own Reward, but not destroy the Obligation to my duty.*

It is the former part of the words that I shall limit the Discourse unto, in which I shall not so much consider the Apostle's Circumstances, as the disposition of mind which he makes so necessary to his acceptance, under this Proposition:

Doct. *That a willing mind in the performance of our duty, is highly necessary to our Acceptance and Reward. Or thus ; Whoever would receive the Reward of well doing, had need to do it with a willing mind.*

I am speaking to Ministers, but I would discourse of that which concerns others as well as them, and shall shew you,

1. What that disposition of mind is, which the Apostle makes so necessary to well doing, that all may know whether they have this *willing mind*.

2. Shew its Necessity in the general to all Men.

3. That Ministers above others should have it.

4. Draw some practical Inferences from the Proposition, in relation to us all as *Christians*, but especially as *Ministers*.

1. This willing mind seems to consist of two things.

1. A *fixing* of the *Will* that it may stick to its *duty*.

2. The *cheerfulness* of the *mind* in its *performance*.

First, The *Will* must be *fixed* ; without this nothing is done

done willingly. The great Controversie of late hath been, who doth determine the Will, *God* by the *Irresistible Operation* of his *Grace*, or *Man* by making those *Operations* to be *effectual*? In which Controversie, whilst *some* have given to *Man* more power than in truth is in him; *others* have gone into another extreme; those that go in the former extreme, though otherwise very Learned Men, do so rarely mention the *Supernatural Operations* of the *Holy Spirit*, which are as necessary to *deliver the Soul* from the bonds of *Sin*, as to *Release the Body* from the power of the *Grave* at the last day; that as one faith of the *Socinians*, 'tis hard to call them *Hereticks*, for they scarce deserve to be called *Christians*; so of these Men 'tis hard to say that they Preach *another Gospel*; for they seldom Preach *any Gospel*; and yet some have erred on the other hand, as if *God's Grace* had so superseded *Man's duty*, that there were nothing for us to do, but to look when *God will do it*, that we may sit still and *do nothing*. The truth lieth between these two extremes, which will the sooner appear if you consider, that they only are *willing* whom *God doth make willing*; and yet every *Man* that is *truly willing*, his *heart* doth stir him up to his *own duty*, and his *own spirit* doth *make him willing*.

1. They only are willing whom *God doth make willing*; for 'tis his work to subdue the will, a work that *needs* and *becomes* a *God* to do; the work is the greatest manifestation of a *Divine Power*; Psal. 110. 3. *Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness; from the womb of the morning, thou hast the dew of thy youth.* The words seem to relate to those *early* and *numerous* Conversions which are recorded in the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, where you find *thousands* at *one Sermon* converted to *Christianity*, which times are therefore called *the womb of the morning*, and *the dew of Christ's youth*; because, as he that goeth forth in the  
*morning*



*morning* is then *strongest* for his *Labour*, and the *Young Man* hath most *agility* of body to run the *Race*: So the *Grace* of God in the first publishing of it should go forth with that *power* as is in the *young* for his *Race*, as is in a *strong Man* for his *Labour*. Hence it is that they that think they have *made themselves willing*, do but deceive themselves, when by the *Grace of God* they were not *made so*; for the *Will* of Man is conquered by none but *God*; Men may attempt it, to *bend* it to God's *Will*, as you would *bend* a *crooked Stick*; it will return to its own *crookedness*. And therefore *Moses* that knew what a great work 'tis to *fix* the *heart* to its *duty*, tells the *People*, that though they had seen more of God's *Power* than ever any *Nation* before them, or perhaps more than ever any *Nation* shall see whilst the *World* continueth, if God would do this, they would see more of a *Divine Power* than as yet they had seen; *Deut. 29. 2, 3, 4. Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the Land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and his Servants, and to all his Land, the great temptations which thine eyes have seen, yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive the greatness of the work; and the successfulness of outward means* shews it to be *God's work*, and therefore to argue against this from some difficulties that occur in stating the *Controversies*, as to the *manner* of the operation of the *Holy Spirit* upon our *Wills*; that because Man hath a *self-determining Principle*, and is *Master* of his own *actions*, which can't be denied; yet to argue from hence, that this can't agree with the *Irresistible Operations* of God's *Grace*, is to pretend a tenderness to *Human Nature*, that we may not wrong that, and in the mean time wrong *God*, as if we were to be more tender of *Man's Honour* than of *God's Honour*: Why should it not suffice us what so many have said in this matter, that the turning of the *Will* is done by *Moral Persuasion* as Man is a *Rational Creature*, made for *Moral Government*; but the *Effi-*  
cacy



*cacy* of God's Grace lieth in the immediate *Operations* of God's Spirit upon Man's Will, which is subdued in a way of *power*, as Man is a *wicked Creature*, and yet so subdued, that no Man is *forced* against his Will, but made *willing*; and yet that which makes him so, is not the *cooperation* of his own Will with God's Spirit, but the *Conquest* of the Spirit over the Will, which being *effectual*, Man shall not be able to *Resist* it; and if he *could*, he *would not*, he is so drawn by Love, as well as subdued by Power. Now to scorn all this, which in effect so many have done, by saying, How can this be, and Man act as a *self-determining* Creature, Master of his own *Actions*? is to pretend that we can *refine* upon every thing that is done in the World; when in the mean time if we descend into the *manner* of things, we can give account of *nothing*; for though we do all know that we can will, and chuse, and refuse, and think, and love, and hate, yet enquire *how* this is done, *how* the Soul, that is a Spirit, doth operate upon the Body, to move and stir it, and *how* one thought doth beget another, and who can give an account of all this? Why then should we pretend to know *how far* the Spirit of God can operate upon our Souls to *incline* us to good, and not *destroy* that *determining Principle* which is in all Men? and therefore it will more become us to believe that which the Scripture is so positive in, though we can't give an account *how* 'tis.

And, as I hinted before, there is not only need of God's Grace to *determine* the Will to its duty, but to *keep* it there: For we are apt to go off from our own *Resolutions* and *Purposes*, and to lose the present *Impression* of God's Grace; the *willing mind* will of it self become *unwilling*; and therefore God having *tryed* us in *Adam*, doth not *trust* us in the *Second Covenant* to our selves; and we have need to consider this, that we may not depend upon the *first determination* of

our own *Wills*; we are *mutable, fickle, and unconstant* Creatures; our *hearts* are *deceitful*, not only in this, that they are not really *willing* when they *seem* so, but are soon *chang'd* from *willing* to be *unwilling*; and the true Reason why Men do not live more *suitable* to their own *Resolutions*, is not because they were *never willing* but because men do *change their minds* from *willing* to *unwilling*, for which reason 'tis that God *desclaimes* his being like *Man*, that he should *lie* or *Repent*; Men will *promise* what they never *Intend* to *perform*: this is *lying* with a witness; but besides that, they that *scorn* to do *this* do *Repent*, that is *change their minds*, God is not *such* an one, *we will serve the Lord*, said the People, but *you can't serve the Lord* said *Joshua*, not that *absolutely* they could not, but because he saw in them a kind of *rashness* to *promise* and *resolve*, but they did not enough consider that to do what they *promised* there was more need of *Gods Grace* than as yet they were sensible of, and without *this* they could not *serve the Lord*, and it is generally the *mistake* of good men to think that they shall be *able* to do what they are *willing* to do, *Peter* found it so, *David*, whose heart was *made willing*, prays that it might be *kept* so. 1 Chron. 29. 18. *Who am I, and what is this People?* that we should be able to offer so *willingly*, keep *this Lord* for ever in the *Imaginations* of the *thoughts* of the *hearts* of *this people*, and *establisht* their hearts to thee; that is, thou hast *made us willing*, Lord *keep us so*, the first grace to determine the *will* may be given, and that grace not given which is needfull to *performance*. He *worketh* to *will* and to *do*, Phil. 2. 13. *Paul* found it so, to *will* is *present* with me, but *how to perform* I find not.

2. And yet he only is *willing* whose heart doth stir him up, and whose *Spirit* doth make him *willing*, as 'tis said of the Children of *Israel* Exod. 35. 21, 29. and they came every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whose  
Spirit

*Spirit made him willing*, verse 29. the Children of Israel brought a *willing* offering to the Lord, every Man and Woman whose *heart* made them *willing*; it is the *want* of *this* that God complains of Isa. 64. 7. *none stirreth up himself*, and the Apostle Paul would have Timothy *stir up the gift in him*, not only the *Ministerial*, but the *Sanctifying gift* of Gods Grace, for though the Grace of God be not made *effectual* by our own *co-operation* with it, neither is it *effectual* without our own *Concurrence*, and therefore it is that we are directed to our duty towards Gods Grace, and that not only when we *have it*, but that we may *obtain it*; not only to *keep* our selves *awake* when God hath *awakned*, but to *awake out of sleep* that Christ may *give us Life*, Eph. 5. 14. for 'tis the *heart*, the *will* in man that is the *Fountain* of all the good or evil that is in man, and under Gods Grace the *first mover*: *out of the heart proceeds Murder, Fornication and Adultery, and a good Man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things*; as we are never subdued to Gods Grace till the *will* be subdued, so the *will* is never subdued, till it *stirs us* up to our duty. Prov. 2. 10. *when Wisdom entereth into thy heart and knowledge is pleasant to thy Soul*, then the work succeeds, and never till then, for (as Mr. Fenner saith) *sincerity lieth in the Will*. So that as he that would *kindle* the fire must *put* the *Fewel* together, and then *Blow* to it; So God working upon us as *Rational Creatures*, doth expect that we *do* what we *may*; towards our turning to Him; and this *stirring up* our Selves that our hearts may *make us Willing*, holds as to the *first Grace* by which the *Will* is *determined*, and as to that *Subsequent* grace, by which it is *kept* to its duty; and in both Respects is *Oppos'd*,

1. To *Outward Judgments*, and *Foreign motives*, which many a man is *Influenc'd* by, whose heart doth not make him

willing ; and when 'tis so, the *thing done*, though otherwise *Good* and *Praise-worthy*, hath no acceptance with God : for 'tis not done *willingly*, that is *sincerely* : *Jehu* in his access to the Throne of his master *Abah*, pretended *Zeal* to the Lord God of *Israel*, and in that pretended zeal pulled down the Altar and Images of *Baal*, and destroyed his Masters house, and yet saith God ( though *Jehu* did what he was commanded ) *I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu*. The blood of that Woman as *Bad* as she was, was too good to be spilt upon so low an end as *Jehu* purposed to himself ; for it seems it was not *Gods Glory*, but his own *security* or *Revenge*, or both : the like may be said as to *custom* or *example*, the latter of which, though we may *Lawfully* make a good use of, yet when 'tis that only or *Chiefly* that prompts us to our Duty, It will never please God, and generally He is made *Willing* by *foreign motives*, the *Praise* or *fear* or the *example* of men that he may not seem *singular*, anything else that is short of *Gods Glory*, take away that, and He goeth no farther, as when you take away the weight that made the Clock go, it stoppeth.

2. And It must be in *opposition* to the workings of *Conscience enlightened*, but not *Renewed* : for we may have a *sense* of our *Duty* when we have no *Inclination* to its performance. I don't say but 'tis better to do what is good and to forbear what is *Evil*, though it be only the *sense* of our *Duty*, without a *Willing mind*, prompting us to it, and yet 'tis evident enough that this is a *sort of Religion*, which none should rest in : conscience when *Enlightened* but not *Sanctified*, may put Men upon doing something in Religion, which is far enough from what the Apostle calls *Obedying from the heart* ; take a wicked Man at some *Particular times*, when he is under the Influences of *Fear* upon a *Sick bed*, and how free doth he seem to be from that *rancor* and *prejudice* that

that before appeared in him ? *Now* he is for an *Holy Life*, *Resolv'd* on a *Sudden*, now he is for *Prayers* and perhaps *those Prayers* which before he *scoff'd at* ! What a change doth this seem to be ? but yet this *Work* is but the *Operation* of an *enlightned awakned* conscience, *melted, humbled* under the *sense* of *Goas Wrath* ; but yet as the metal when in the Fire was *soft*, when out of the Fire grows as *hard* or *harder than* before, so do they that are only under the operation of fear, *In their affliction they will seek me early, than they will cry, arise and save us.* Jer. 2. 26. 'tis *Fear* chiefly that works upon *Conscience* when *enlightned* only, but not *Renewed* and *Sanctified*.

And therefore it is that when what they *feared* seems upon their *Recovery* to be at a *distance* from them, they *fear* it as little as before ; for *fear* is not *lasting* ; he whose *Conscience* only doth *stir him up* to his *Duty*, will seek an advantage one time or other to be at *liberty* from his *fears* : for he is as a man in *Prison* that cannot go and do as he would, but an heart *made Willing* by the *Grace of God* ; and making *us Willing* is enlarg'd to its *Duty* ; were there more of this *disposition* of mind in us, there would be less need of the *Restraints* or *Constrains* of *Conscience*, 'tis to be observ'd in the *Children of Israel* at the first setting up of the *Tabernacle*, their own hearts stirring them up, they did so forward the work that *Moses* made a *Proclamation* throughout the *Camp*, *let no Man make any more work for the Tabernacle, and so the People were restrained.* Exod. 36. 6, 7. For want of this there is no need in any *Publick* work to restrain men from over doing ; It were well if by any means men would be constrained to their *Duty*.

2. This willing mind consists in a *cheerfull performance* of our *Duty* ; he that can live under a *sense* of his *Duty*, and can attain to a *Resolvedness* to *stick* to its *Performance*,  
and

and in the performance can find in himself a *cheerfulness* of mind, hath attain'd a good measure of that disposition of Spirit, which the Apostle makes so necessary to our acceptance and Reward: for where the Will is subdued, it doth carry with it the subordinate affections and so where the Will is, Love is, and where Love is, delight will be. The great Promise of God is to write his Laws upon our hearts, now this writing the Law in the heart signifieth an act of Grace upon the Will towards Gods Law, rather than upon the understanding to know it: for the misery of man lyeth not so much in an Ignorance of Gods Will, as in an enmity to it; now when God takes away this enmity, and puts a new byas into our Souls Love and delight will not only constrain us to Obedience, but will make it more or less Easy and Delightfull: Most things are to us as we stand affected to them, and therefore that is a delight to one, that to another is a burden; but now God in order to Reduce us to our Duty, doth give us disposition suitable to it, and therefore when this Will of God meets with a disposition suitable to it, 'tis this makes obedience Easie, and us cheerfull in it, thy Law is in my heart, I delight to do thy Will O God. Psal. 40. 8. So that he that cannot delight himself in the Almighty, nor in his Duty, is never like to persist in it, Psal. 37. 4. I do not extend this so far as to exclude all those from the Grace of God, that have not the Savour of Religion, those sensitive Joys and Affections which are rather the Evidences of the full assurance of understanding, than of Grace in its lower degrees, but I speak it in this sense, that what we do in obedience to Gods Will must not be a burden to us: for what is a burden though for a time we may bear it, one time or other we shall lay it down, at least we must be so far Reconciled to our Duty, that we had rather do it, than Neglect: for what we Do grudgingly, and had rather do otherwise though  
for



for some reasons we *do it*, 'tis in the sight of God as if we *did it not*.

2. The necessity of this disposition will appear if you consider two things.

1. No good in an Ordinary way will be done without it, to do is more than to Will in some respect. Rom. 7. 18. The Apostle found it so, the Apostle doth not absolutely deny a Power Imparted to him for the doing Good; for I beleive he speaks of himself, as renewed by the Grace of God, but he compares doing and Willing, and tells us he found it easier to Will than to perform; now if where the Willing mind is, a Power to do may be wanting, It will be much more so, where the Willing Mind is not; I know where the Willing Mind, which is first in order of nature, is vouchsafed the Power to Perform shall be given in some measure, yet It must needs be that where that which is first in order of Nature and not obtain'd, that which depends upon it cannot be expected, for as in going up the Ladder you must begin at the lowest range, so in order to acceptable Obedience, we must begin at the Willing Mind; the reason why the Stony ground brought not forth any thing to perfection, was this it had no depth of Earth to cherish the Seed, so is all Obedience without an heart made Willing; either it will not be at all, or it Will wither, as the Grass upon the house top, wherewith the Mower filleth not his hands

2. This Willing Mind doth so forward men to that which tends to Gods Glory, and the Good of others, that this may convince us of its necessity; thus then the person pleads not excuses, layes aside his delays, is exalted above Discouragements, and ordinarily we may expect assisting Grace to perform, when by the grace of God we are Inclined to our Duty.

1. We are apt to excuse our selves out of our Duty, and the

the general *excuse* of wicked Men is, they *Cannot*; but the *True Reason* is our *want of a Will*: if men were *really willing* (as Mr. Fenner observes) they would *do* what they *can*, but when men can do something, at least *frame* their doings that they may turn to the Lord, *consider*, that they may *Repent*, *bear*, that they may *consider* and *attend* the word of God, and the *places of his Worship*, where they may *bear* their *Duty* and *know* their *danger*, 'tis evident that men can do this; what should hinder them? Now when men *can* do this and yet *will* not, and then pretend *excuses*, how Justly may God *Condemn* such persons? an heart made *Willing* layes aside *excuses*, there is no *Lion in that Mans way*; pleading *excuses* argues, that there is at the present a *contest* within as to our *Duty*, whither we *shall* or *no*, and so far as we *Cleave* to our *excuses*, so far we *take* part with *Sin*, against *Conscience* and *Conviction*, for the *design* of *Conviction* is to put us *forward*, but the *design* of *excuses* is to *draw* us out of the hands of *Mercy*. An heart made *willing*, as far as 'tis *really willing*, lays aside its *excuses*. *Peter* had an *Excuse*, in appearance a *good one*, *we have toiled all Night, and taken nothing, nevertheless at thy word I will cast in the Net*.

2. This *Willing Mind* will not be *put off with delays*, 'tis said, that *he that believeth will not make haste*, but 'tis meant of the *thing Promised* and *Expected*, in relation to which he that *Believeth* will *wait*, and not *precipitate* the *Counsell* of God, nor the *accomplishment* of the *Promise* either *before its time*, or in an *unlawfull manner*; but in Relation to our *Duty*, the *sooner*, generally the *better*; for we may set about it *too late*, but seldom or never *too soon*. So that he that is *really Willing* to turn to God, doth *determine* to do it *presently*, *deferring* to *hereafter* is the fruit of an *unwilling Mind*. Pro. 3. 27, 28. *Withhold not good from him to whom it is due, when it is in the*



*the Power of thy hands to do it, Say not to thy Neighbour go and come again, and to Morrow I will give, when thou hast it by thee. The Wise Man considered that delaying is not safe, for we may either loose the Opportunity of doing, or, which is worse, the Will to perform, the present Impression as well as the present opportunity may be gone by delaying without a good cause, we make no Conscience of the Command that relates to the Time, and to Morrow we may make no Conscience of that part of the Command that relates to the thing it self. The Apostle whom God at an Instant Inclined to his Duty, did immediately set about it, Gal. 1. 15, 16, 17 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my Mothers Womb, and called me by his grace to reveal his Son in me, that I might Preach him among the eathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and Blood. And therefore it must needs be a general mistake in the World for men to pretend that they are not only Convinced that 'tis their Duty to lead a new Life, but Willing, and yet this must not be till hereafter.*

And yet think it shall be well enough, especially if it should happen that they live to that hereafter; 'tis true in some cases and as to some particular dutys, It may consist with a willing mind to defer them, when the present time is not convenient, or when the time to come may prove more advantagious; but as to the amendment of a Mans life, to pretend to be willing, but not for the present, as in it self 'tis not a real willingness, so in some respect 'tis a resolution to the contrary of what we pretend to, and therefore how can such a purpose be pleasing to God? consider that besides the danger that you run, and the presumption that you manifest, that the grace and Mercy of God, nay, God himself shall be at your beck, when you shall be at leisure to return to him, & you do at present resolve that as yet you will not as if you had not enough provoked the Almighty, as if

the time past of your Life did not suffice you to have wrought wickedness, but you will continue to do so longer ; you do in effect declare that you ought to live otherwise, than you have done, that you must do otherwise, and be other manner of persons, and yet though you have wronged God already, and wearied the Almighty, and though if you die in your Sins without repentance you expect damnation ; and though you have no assurance that God will give you longer time, as to be sure you have not yet, you will venture upon it, you will run the hazard of being damned, under a pretence that you will do your Duty hereafter, when you have spent your time in Sin, and can do God no Service ; when you can Sin no longer, you will cease to do Evil, and when you can do nothing, then you will learn to do well ; when the day is at an end, you will go forth to your Labour, and when the Sun is setting then you will set forth for your Journey ; can this delaying consist with a willing mind ;

3. As for *discouragements*, *this disposition of mind will help us to overcome them.* In the best of times well doing will meet with if not direct opposition at least discouragements, for whilst the World continueth, the Seed of the Serpent which sprung up in *Cain* will be, The World will be ungrateful, malicious and opposit to what is good ; even *Morality* hath had its *Persecutors*, much more shall all they *that will live Godly in Christ Jesus* ; the greatest Innocence, the strictest life, the most publick Spirit, the utmost caution shall never be able at all times and in all places, to protect the Servants of God from the tongues or hands and hatred, of the wicked, who rather than they will lose the opportunity of doing mischief, will turn Christians, that under the pretence of the Christian name they may wreak their Malice upon them, that differ not from them, but in those things wherein they  
them-

themselves differ from what they pretend to ; these men will shew a Reverence to the deceased Apostles and Disciples of our Saviour, that they may mischief the living ones, Nay sometimes persecute them for that very thing, for which the Apostles and Disciples of our Lord are revered among Christians; Just so the *Jews did build and adorn the Sepulchers of the Prophets whom their fathers slew*, and did to the *Disciples what their fathers did to the Prophets* ; Now this disposition of mind will help us against these discouragements, for 'tis our unresolv'dness that makes the discouragements that lye in our way, more and greater than they are.

4. Where this is, we may expect *Gods assisting Grace to help us to do what by his Grace we are Inclined to*, for though willing and doing are not equally easy, yet if we humbly go to God under the sense of our Duty, and do not lean too much to our own Resolutions, God will not be wanting to us, his Grace shall be sufficient for us, *Philip. 1. 6. Being confident of this very thing that he that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it untill the day of Jesus Christ* ; 'tis true, God keeps this grace in his own hands, but yet the giving of the first grace doth give us cause to depend upon him for this also, which we shall be sure to obtain, if we do not forfeit it by our neglects. I say again, where this willing Mind is in truth, It will cause that we shall not be Barren nor Unfruitful in the knowledg of our Lord *Jesus Christ* ; for the Kingdom of God doth not consist in Word but in Power, nor in wishing and willing, but in doing and performing.

3. Having shewn in the general the necessity of this disposition of Mind, I would more particularly consider it as 'tis necessary to Ministers, to whom whilst I am speaking I would not be thought to pretend to speak what they can't tell me, as well as I do them, but only to put them in Remembrance of what they all know.

1. Therefore we all know and therefore should consider that the *bare Art of Frenching*, as a task expected at our hands every Lords-day, can never please God, but the *Mind with which this and every other part of our Duty is perform'd*. God is a great God, and a good Master, and therefore a little forc'd service without our Wills, or against our Will, done because we dare not for shamedo otherwise, can this be Accepted and Rewarded? 'tis said in the general there must be a *Willing Mind*, and then God accepts men according to what they have and can do, and not according to what we have not, and therefore cannot do, 2 Cor. 8. 12. This must be first in all men, and first in us Ministers above other men; Our work is so great in turning Men from Darkness to Light, and from the power of Satan to God, that no Man is sufficient for it, and yet notwithstanding our insufficiency for the work, and our lame defective Performance of our Duty, God's declared readiness to accept our endeavours and to Pardon our defects, should at least convince us of the necessity of this disposition, that by it we may chearfully perform our Duty, whilst we have Liberty and Opportunity; for if we get this, It will quicken us to our Duty, It will assist us in it, It will make us Patient in waiting for the success, which if it do not answer our endeavours and desires, yet the want of success shall never deprive us of the acceptance of God, who in rewarding Ministers do:h chiefly look to this disposition; by this means we shall be press'd in Spirit to our Duty and by doing our Duty, we shall Increase this disposition of mind; then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord. Alas! to see the world about us lying in wickedness, and yet hating to be Reform'd, and having those that would tell them they have need to Reform. And to see the world sitting in Darkness, and yet avoiding the Light, should not this convince us that we have need to get a disposition of Mind,

Mind, that may stir us up to do something to amend all this? how little will be done by us without this disposition, seeing so little is done with it?

2. Besides, *The nature of our Employment and business, which is to Preach Good Will toward Men, the love of God in giving his Son to dye for us, the love of Christ in giving his life for us, doth require a frame of mind suitable to the errand that we bring.* If we were to open the *Prophets Roll* in which was nothing but Lamentation and Wo, we were the more excusable, if we did hang back and say, *send by the hands of him whom thou wilt send*; If we had received that message from God to you, that God delivered to the Child *Samuel*, a message that might make *the Peoples ears to tingle, and their hearts to tremble*, we might perhaps lye down again in our sloth as afraid to deliver it; but this is the message that we bring, that God against whom man hath Sinned, from whom we have all departed in *Adam*, hath given man, Fallen, Sinfull Man, Eternal life, and this life is in his Son; surely such an Employment, to be Messengers of such tidings, whatever reception it may meet with from wicked, and unreasonable Men, doth require in us Ministers a disposition of mind suitable to it.

3. *The Ministerial work is attended with a peculiar Reward*; there is a Reward peculiar to a Disciple, and a Reward peculiar to Ministers; if I should tell you how sure and certain the Reward is, you might say so 'tis to all other men, for all Offices of love and Charity, even the Least, *so that he that giveth a Cup of cold water to a Disciple, in the name of a Disciple, shall Receive a Disciples reward*; but yet tho' Ministers have no more certainty of a reward than other Men have, yet they have the certainty of a greater reward, and therefore It is set out by *the shining of the Sun in the Firmament.*

Now

Now surely such a reward doth require a chearful willing Resolute performance of our Duty, and the rather because it is not conditioned upon our success in Converting, but our diligence in the performing our Duty ; for supposing that any Minister should not Convert one Soul ( I believe few that are faithful are so unhappy in their labours ) yet if it should prove so, there is that which may relieve that Minister, *We are* ( saith the Apostle ) *in them that perish a sweet savour to God.* God that knoweth all Mens hearts doth see 'twas what such Ministers did desire and endeavour, and God accepts them not according to the success, but their desires and endeavours, to which this disposition is so highly usefull.

4. The Practical Inferences are.

1. *This shews the Reason of our backwardness to our Duty,* who is there that hath not his excuses for his neglects ? but the plain truth is all our excuses and delays do proceed from our unwillingness ; the *Jews* upon their recovery out of the Captivity, could not deny but 'twas fit that the Temple should be built, but 'twas no fit time to set about it, It went hard with them, they were newly come out of the Captivity, they were poor, they had many Enemies, and yet though they could not finish the Temple, they had their Ceiled Houses : now an heart made willing can over-look and despise greater discouragements than we can pretend unto.

2. *'Tis not only our Duty to do Well, but to look to the Principle from which every act of Obedience floweth.* The Apostle speaks of some Men, that *to every good Work they are Reprobates*, having neither a Will to, nor a skill in the performance of them, *Titus*, 1. 16. and because we are so averse to all that is good, we must be *New made, Created in Christ Jesus to good works*, and by this  
you



you may see where our chief care should be, even to that which God chiefly requires, and first begins at : thou art troubled at thy performances, I don't utterly dislike that trouble, but thou had'st need to look at something beyond that ; thy Nature, that, that be changed, thy Will, that, that be subdued, that thereby thou be made *meet for thy Masters use and Service, and prepared to every good work*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. to have the fewel is not enough till you have fire to kindle it ; without the renewing, disposing Grace of God, we may be considerate in our words and actions, and do many things outwardly good and usefull, and yet all this while be destitute of that which is so seldom mentioned in some Mens Writings, and so oft in the Gospel, *viz.* Grace without which men may have a Resemblance of the Life Spiritual, as the Plant hath of the life Sensitive ; many a man may have the likeness of the life of God in him, and yet remain in the corrupt state of Nature. So that we should not only take care to do well, but labour for a Mind fram'd to our Duty.

3. *Have a care of being stirred up to your Duty by such Inducements as are short of this willing Mind*, See we to this, that we be stirred up from something within us, and that it be not any thing less than an heart prompting us to our Duty ; that only is well done that is done to the Glory of God ; and not upon a design, let the design be what it will, if it be not to please God, and to be accepted of him, It will leave us short of the future reward ; for though it hath the appearance of an act of Religion, God Esteems it not so : *have ye fasted unto me?* to fast for stuff, to pray to be seen of Men, to give Alms to be applauded, may go a great way in the sight of Men, who ought to the praise action without Enquiring

quiring into the heart, but it hath no other reward than what is here; but he that is prompted to his Duty from his own heart, *hath a Testimony in himself, in which he may rejoice.* 2 Cor. 1. 12.

4. And Lastly, let us all get this *Willing Mind*, this *disposing principle*, that what we do may be *accepted* and *Rewarded*: under this head I shall speak in the *general* to all, and *Particularly* to my brethren in the *Ministry*.

1. All of us have need to *Pray* and to be *Instant with God* for this *disposition of Mind*: For

First by this means our Duty will be the more easy; 'tis true Christ hath a *Yoke*, and a *Burden*, but there is nothing that tends more to make it easy to us, than the disposedness of our *Wills* and *Hearts* unto it.

2. The Will being the chief executive faculty, where that is there the delight of the Soul followeth, and what a desirable disposition will this be when our Duty becomes our *Delight*, that as nature hath provided a delight in doing those things that tend to its preservation, such as is the Saline humour in the Palat, adjoyning it self with our Meat and Drink, so when Grace doth furnish us with a disposition Co natural to our Duty, that it shall be our Meat and Drink to do Gods Will; How desireable is such a temper? get me this, and we shall find by experience that the ways of Wisdom are ways of Pleasantness.

3. Hereby our Obedience will be more steady and even, and we more constant and steadfast in it, Ephraim is said to be as



as a Bullock that was not accustomed to the Yoke, not used to work: now such a Bullock is sore with his labour, and unskillfull in it, It makes bawks; 'tis in and out; the main and principal reason of our uneven walking, is either the want of a will fix'd and determin'd to its Duty, or not carry'd forth with delight in its performance.

2. Directions.

1. First, *Beg this disposition by Prayer, every good and perfect gift cometh from above*, this especially: if we can do it our selves, Incline and fix our Wills to our Duty, our sin is the greater if we do not; but if we cannot do it of our selves (as to be sure we cannot) our sin is the greater, that we are not more earnest and Incessant with God to help us. Prayers for the first converting Grace, are not altogether unacceptable to God; *let us have Grace* (saith the Apostle) that is, *let us seek it that we may have it*, let us Pray that we may obtain it; and indeed if the natural man could be supposed seriously and heartily to desire this Grace, we could not (without wronging of God) suppose that he would deny him; they that have not higher and stronger arguments, may plead from such as they have, their relation to God as the work of his hands, their rational and natural Powers, *thy hands have made me* (saith the Psalmist) *give me understanding*; beg also the continuing and Increase of this first disposing Grace, that he that hath made the Willing would keep so, and make the more Willing.

2. *Keep your hearts under a sense of your Duty*; for tho' the sense of Duty may be urg'd upon us by an enlightned conscience, which will leave us short of a willing Mind, yet 'tis good to feel something in our selves pleading Gods right, urging upon us the necessity of our obedience; the Apostle did so, *if against my Will a dispensation is committed to me: I must do my Duty*, Willing or Unwilling it ought to

be done ; though I lose the reward, God will not lose his Right.

3. *Do what you can to make your selves Willing, and do what you can to keep your Selves so*, even in conversion we must not expect that because God can, that therefore he should do all, though all that Man ; doth in his conversion, doth not make, nor is the reason why Grace is effectual in this rather than in that Man, this doth not supersede Mans Duty towards God's Grace ; no, but every one should do his own part, we can attend the means and we can consider and Remember, and though all that do this do not turn to God, yet 'tis the way to it, the *Psalmist thought and turned* and 'tis said *all the ends of the Earth shall Remember and turn to the Lord* Psal. 22. 27. and God blames them that *they would not frame their doings to turn to the Lord.* they would do nothing to promote it *Hof. 5. 4.*

4. Consider *what Encouragements you have from a good God, and from a Gracious Covenant*, wherein sincere endeavours are accepted and involuntary weaknesses are pardoned to them that do their best, though it be infinitely short of what is due, *Mal. 3. 17. I will spare them as a Man that spareth his only Son that serveth him.*

2. And lastly, *as to my brethren the Ministers*, all that I have now to say is to my self and you those that would know the reason of our coming together at this time, It is this that I have been all this while speaking to, *viz.* To Stir up one another to the Dutys of our calling, and to promote the necessary work of our Ministry. I do not pretend to dictate to Ministers what is their Duty, but yet I consider that that Minister that needs not to be directed what to do, may yet be content to be encouraged, may need it, and will be thankful for it. Even *St. Paul* himself when the brethren from *Rome* came to meet him

at.

at *Appij forum* and the three Taverns, *he thanked God, and took courage.* If I could so far serve my Brethren 'tis what I aim at.

And truly (whatever our Circumstances are) we may do well to consider the *Apostles* for our *Encouragement*, that we may have this *Willing Mind*; now the *Apostle* through the perverseness of some Men esteemed it his Duty not only to *Preach* to the *Corinthians*, but to do it for nothing. And yet It was not because the *Apostle* was richer than other men, no, for being an *Apostle*, and having such a charge upon him, he would not have laboured with his own hands for a livelihood, if there had not been a necessity lying upon him to do both, to *Work* and yet to *Preach*; now thanks be to God our *Circumstances* are not the same, and for that reason it is rarely the Duty of a Minister to do as the *Apostle* did, who yet shews the greatest satisfaction in his condition, and a full Resolution to stick to his Duty, a necessity is laid upon me, and yet he would not be without a *Willing Mind* under that necessity. And therefore let our Circumstances be what they will, if we can get this disposition of Mind, and keep it, we shall have cause to bless God that hath not only put us into the Ministry, but into our present Circumstances, and we have reason to be so disposed to our duty and circumstances, not only from the presence of Christ with us, as being workers together with him, but also from that great change that Almighty God hath made in our Circumstances, which although they are not such as perhaps some could desire, yet they are not such as formerly they were, when the Civil Magistrate pinch'd so hard upon us, as being instigated doubtless by such Men as should rather have Rejoyced that Christ was Preach'd, than have stir'd up adversaries against Us. But now 'tis otherwise, and let us bless God for it, and it being otherwise, let us endeavour to forget what is past, and together with them do

our part to Raise up the Tabernacle of God, and to bring back the People from that *Debauchery* and *Profaneness*, which hath Spread it self among them, and to *Establish* them against *Atheism* and *Popery*. If any of our Brethren have done any thing towards the casting us out as unfit builders; if they have done more than became them as *Ministers* or *Christians*, in adding to our affliction, let us endeavour to forget it, and Watch over our own Spirits, that the Remembrance of what is past do not *Imbitter* our own Spirits towards them, as theirs seem'd to be towards us, good Men in their hearts do not enough consider what manner of Spirit they are of. Though they (some of them) esteemed us the *Pests* of the Nation, unfit not only to *Preach*, but to live, let us consider it was but some of them; for as to many of them, we ought to Rejoyce that the same Christ, the same Gospel is Preach'd to the People that attend their Ministry, as is Preach'd by us to the People that attend Ours, and whilst the Contention is whose way is best, who do Preach most suitably to the design of the Gospel, let us Remember that that Minister doth most answer the design of the Gospel, who doth most Preach Love and Charity; and truly that Ministers Charity is not very large, that limits the *Catholick Church* to his own party, to Men of his own Mind and way, nor on the other side do I esteem that Ministers Charity, to be very large, that can see *Idolatry* in every thing that is not expressly commanded in the Worship of God, as if every fault that we commit in worshipping God were of one sort and kind, and that the most *Detestable*, and *Abominable*, for so is *Idolatry*.

Consider we what a Mercy 'tis to have Liberty to do our Duty in Peace and quietness, all of us can't travel to find places to Preach in, all are not Fitted to endure noise and clamour, but all of us if we can get this *Willing Mind*,  
that

that was in the *Apostle*, may find *time* and *place* to do some good to the People. *Discontent* at our own *condition* generally springeth from the reflections that we make upon the *condition* of those that are *above us*; now if such thoughts should arise, they that *can Conform* have the *advantage* over us, and perhaps many of them do less, if their way be by *Establishment* and ours only by *Allowance*; let us consider, we have more than the *Apostles* and *Disciples* of our *Saviour* liv'd to see, for they were never free from *Persecution*, any longer than their *Persecutors* were wearied with their own *Persecutions*, or *diverted* by other *intervening* occasions, or *Restrained* by Gods *Providence* some other way; nay, we have as much *Liberty* as we are *Capable* of at *Present*.

And if they that Conform live in greater plenty, let us watch against *Repining* thoughts at that, and see to it, that whilst they (some of them) *Melt away* in the midst of their Plenty, we don't *Pine away* under our *Discouragements*.

As to what is past 'tis to be considered that the hard usage which some Ministers met with, was not so much (if at all) from them that are now esteemed the leading Men of the Church of *England*; Whether they *did* in this *their Duty* that they *did no more*, I cannot say; but they did declare their *dislike* of those *Severities*, and were *always* Men of *Moderation*, and do now declare their readiness to *abate* somethings that the *Law* requires of us to the more *Publick* exercise of our *Ministry* in the *Parish Churches*; but these *Severities* were *set on Foot* by Men that called themselves the *Church of England*, and yet designed an *accommodation* with the *Church of Rome*; and therefore 'tis no marvel if on that score they had so little respect to dissenting Ministers, or taking them to be a *Party*, that might be *crash'd* by *Severity*, rather than *made Elibable* to such a design:

Dr.

Dr. Heylin that doth not only *confess* but *Justify* such a *design*, gives a full account of this matter. But now to allay all heats, we may do well to consider that we have to do with *such* Men that had rather *abate* of what is *Establish'd*, than *add* to it, that have owned the *Reformation* to be *Imperfect*, that would not have us go *backward* towards *Rome* to please the *Papists*, but *Forward*; now who knoweth what such a temper may produce? In the mean time let us with all *cheerfulness* attend our *calling*, and perform our *Duty*, and this will carry us against our *Discouragements*: discouragements there will be not only from them that are *against us*, but from them that are *with us* and *for us*.

But this disposition of mind will help us to weather them out and *persist* in our *Duty*, and to do *what we may*, and *whilst we may*, I say *whilst we may*; for I am persuaded that that *Door* of *Liberty* to do our *Duty* in *quietness* and *Peace*, which *Divine Providence* hath now of late opened shall not be *shut* again but by our own *negligence* or the *Peoples* unprofitableness.

There are two things that *Ministers* above *other Men* should *fear*, viz. the *loss* of the *opportunity* for doing their *Duty*, and the *loss* of that *disposition* of *Mind*, that is necessary to its *acceptable performance*; as for the former, the *opportunity* of doing our *Duty*, and the *quiet exercise* of our *Ministry*, 'tis God that gave it, nay *wrench'd* it out of the hands of those men that *never* Intended it, and without his *leave* none shall *shut* this *Door*; as to the latter a *disposition* of *Mind* towards the *performance* of our *Duty*, the preservation of this is *more especially* our concern, and to see that we do not neglect Gods gift in us. God hath been pleased of late years especially to enlarge our *opportunities*; and we shall have no need to fear the *loss* of those whilst we *diligently attend* our *Duty*; and God to *prevent* our *fears*, that they

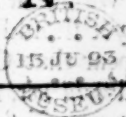


they may not *distract* us in our *Duty*, hath as it were secured our *Liberty* not only by a *Law*, but by *twisting* it with the *Interest* of the *Nation*; So that those very *Men* or *Men* of the *Same Mind*, that before argued for *Severity*, and for a *restraint*, from the *Interest* of the *Nation*, do begin to argue for *Liberty*, for *Moderation* from the *same Topick*; I do not say that the *argument* was well *applied*, or that it was ever, or ever will be the *real Interest* of the *Nation*, or of any other *Nation* to be *Severe* towards all that differ from the *Establish'd way*: God in giving *Nations Christian Princes*, doth not give those *Princes* for this Reason, because they are *Christians*, a *Power* to do *Evil*; no, by being *Christians* they have an *advantage* to do the more *Good*, but they have never the more *Power* to *persecute* or do *Evil*; but if wise Men do sometimes argue for *Severity* and *Restraint*, and in a little time after *against Severity* from the *Interest of the Nation*, then it follows that either the *Interest of Nations* may *Vary*, and so Indeed it may, or else *Wise Men* do *change* their *Minds* and are not *always* wise; and therefore neither by the one or the other have we any great security, and it being so there is nothing that we can with *more safety* trust to under God, than the *diligent performance* of our *Duty*, that will secure our *Liberty* if any thing shall do it; for if we *Willingly diligently* and *painfully* Preach as we are able, and as we have an *Opportunity* and a *call*, and yet should happen to be *restrain'd* as before, than it will appear that God *took* it from us; but 'tis to be hoped that God *will not*, for *ordinarily* he doth not *punish* as a *Sovereign*, but as a *Just Judge* provoked by our *Sins*. The way therefore to preserve our *Liberty* is to do our *Duty*.

Besides the *losing the opportunity*, we should fear to *lose the Disposition of Mind* to *perform our Duty*; this by *Negligence*.  
will.

will be *lost* or *abated*, as *tools* not *used* will *Rust*, and *In-*  
*struments* of *Musick* laid *aside* will grow out of *Tune*, but  
 if we *persist* in our *Duty*, that will *dispose* us to it, and by  
 this means our work will be the *more easy* and *delightfull* to  
 us; and this is the way to *profit* the *People* and to be *Successfull*  
 in our labours, for the more we stand *affected* to our *Duty*,  
 the more we shall be in *earnest* with the *People*, without  
 which the *Ministry* *seldom* succeeds; and then when we can  
*discern* that some *Good* is done, that will again *put Life* into  
 us; a *Willing Mind* in the *Minister* is most likely to beget a  
*Willing Mind* in the *People*, and by this means the *one* will  
 mutually assist the *other*: However, if *success* do not attend  
 (as alas! it doth not in some places) yet there is that which  
 may *relieve* us in that *case*; our *reward* is with the  
 Lord, to whom, whatever the *Issue* be, we shall be a *sweet*  
*Yield*, this is our *last relief*, the *eyeing* the *Reward*, the  
 Ministerial *Reward*; which if we *believe* and *consider*, will  
 help us to be *Siedfast* and *unmoveable*, and to *abound* in the  
*Work* of the Lord, whilst we know that (though as to men it  
 may be much *Fruitless*, yet) it shall not be in *vain* in  
 the Lord.

F I N I S.



E R A T U R A.

P Age 1. line ult. for *Exposit* read *Exposit*, p. 4. l. 30. for *For*, r. *From*, p. 8. l. 9. after  
*sick* add *but*, p. 12. l. 16. after *He*, add *that*, l. 18. after *ingular* add *or*, p. 13. l.  
 7. for *When* r. *which*, p. 14. l. 25, for *Swatity*, r. *Swatity*, l. 32. after *Night*, add *u*, p.  
 15. l. 17. for *And*, r. *u*.



